

APR 20 1972

Mr. A. P. Sampson  
Commissioner  
Public Buildings Service  
General Services Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20405

Dear Mr. Sampson:

I am responding to Mr. Stewart's letter of April 10, 1972, regarding the General Services Administration proposal for a plaza over the Center Leg Freeway and am addressing the issues regarding this proposal.

I am sure you are familiar with past developments wherein the District of Columbia Department of Highways and Traffic worked closely with the General Services Administration a few years ago in developing the Labor Building, which promises to be one of the Nation's outstanding examples of the joint use-air rights concept. The Center Leg Tunnel was extended northward from Constitution Avenue to D Street to provide adequate site for this building. In addition, adjustments were made southward of Independence Avenue to provide for the future development of the South Portal Building.

Although we are intensely interested in further promotion of the joint use-air rights concept, our capability to maintain and operate the Center Leg Hall Tunnel as presently designed is already stretched to the limit. We are concerned that extension of this tunnel could produce ambient air quality levels inconsistent with recently adopted standards for future years. If these standards are violated, traffic facilities are subject to closure and developments would be inadequately served.

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The development of the Court Plaza at this location would, in effect, extend the tunnel north from D Street towards E Street. Repeated review of ventilation, driver vehicle manipulation, noise, visual perception of lane and takeoff points, signing and other similar requirements makes the present tunnel limits the maximum practical the Department can accept. This takes into account improvements in techniques that will likely be available in the foreseeable future.

Our review of the plans submitted with Mr. Stewart's letter of April 19 indicates the following unresolved issues:

1. Ventilation of the Covered Freeway - At GSA's request, Consulting Engineers, Sverdrup and Parcel, issued an opinion that the plaza will not interfere with freeway ventilation. We have not received backup data which would substantiate this opinion.
2. Lighting in the Covered Freeway - Sverdrup and Parcel informed GSA that there would be lighting problems with the current plaza design. A driver could pass alternately through areas shaded and open to sunlight which would temporarily impair his vision and his ability to safely control his vehicle.
3. Sight Distance for Freeway Signing - The sight distance to the sign proposed to be mounted on the E Street Bridge is inadequate. The plans show sight distance data for a four foot high sign; the appropriate sign message requires a sign eight feet in height.
4. Joint Use of Freeway Retaining Wall - The plans are vague in this respect, but seem to indicate that the plaza will be supported by the freeway retaining walls. We requested that GSA provide analysis data to show the structural adequacy of this proposal. This data has not been made available for our review.
5. Pedestrian Spillover in Mid-Block Second Street - The plaza pedestrian walkways are oriented to encourage mid-block crossings. Second Street is an important service roadway for collecting and distributing freeway traffic. A mid-block crossing would create pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

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6. Center Plaza Opening and Raised Pool - The benefit of the center opening within the raised pool is questionable. The effect of the additional opening is stated in 2., above.

With respect to the raised pool on the plaza, our experience with the similar installations, where considerable water leakage has occurred, leads to the conclusion that a leakproof construction cannot be assured.

When you have developed additional data, we will be pleased to review it with you in further detail. In this event, I suggest you contact me directly or take the matter up with Mr. Leonard DeCast, Assistant Director for our Office of Planning and Programming.

I should appreciate your cooperation in keeping us informed on this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

1247  
T. W. AIRIS, Director  
Department of Highways and Traffic, D. C.


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5001 SEMINARY ROAD, SUITE 204, ALEXANDRIA, VA. 22311

D. ANTHONY BEALE  
VICE PRESIDENT

cc: LBC&W Associates of Virginia  
Enclosures

Legal Description of a Portion  
of Square 570, Washington, D. C.,  
As Acquired for the Interstate Route 95  
Right-of-way, Area to be Acquired in Fee  
Parcel 2

Beginning at a point, said point lying on the north right-of-way line of D Street and lying on the west right-of-way line of Interstate Route 95; thence with the west right-of-way line of Interstate Route 95 the following courses and distances: due north 125.38 feet; north 45° 00' east 35.17 feet; due north 118.5 feet; north 45° 00' west 34.81 feet; due north 109.38 feet to a point; thence through the right-of-way of Interstate Route 95 due east 39.50 feet; due south 402.75 feet; due west 39.75 feet to the point of beginning and containing 12,424 square feet.



Legal Description of a Portion  
of Square 570, Washington, D. C.,  
Area Over Which to Acquire  
For Ramps, Roadways and Walkways  
Parcel 3

Beginning at a point, said point lying due east 39.75 feet from the intersection of the north right-of-way line of D Street and the west right-of-way line of Interstate Route 95; thence through the Interstate Route 95 right-of-way the following courses and distances: due north 402.75 feet; due east 6.2 feet; south  $01^{\circ} 38' 12''$ ; east 63.03 feet; due south 339.75 feet; due west 8.0 feet to the point of beginning and containing 3,167.93 square feet.

Legal Description of a Portion  
Square 570, Washington, D. C., as  
Area to be Conveyed  
To the District Highway Department

Parcel 1A - Beginning at a point, said point being the intersection of the south right-of-way line of E Street and the east right-of-way line of 3rd Street; thence with the south right-of-way line of E Street due east 110.50 feet to a point; thence due south 3.0 feet to a point; thence through the Tax Court site due west 110.50 feet to a point on the east right-of-way line of 3rd Street; thence with the east right-of-way line of 3rd Street due north 3.0 feet to the point of beginning containing 331.5 square feet.

Legal Description of a Portion  
Square 570, Washington, D. C., as  
Area to be Acquired  
From the District Highway Department

Parcel 1B - Beginning at a point, said point being the intersection of the north right-of-way line of D Street and the east right-of-way line of 3rd Street; thence with the north right-of-way line of D Street due east 158.0 feet to a point; thence through the right-of-way of D Street the following courses and distances: due south 3.5 feet; due west 158.0 feet; due north 3.5 feet to the point of beginning and containing 553.0 square feet.